

## Tire Recycling Program Going Strong at Nucor Steel Auburn

The Fall 2002 issue of Nucor News highlighted an innovative tire recycling program that has made the Bar Mill Group's Auburn Division the nation's first steel mill to recycle tires routinely. Since then, Auburn has continued to steadily increase its recycling activity and is looking forward to growing the program.

Auburn had investigated and tested scrap tire recycling for almost two years before launching a full-scale initiative in partnership with the U.S. EPA as part of the mill's participation in the National Environmental Performance Track Program in February 2002. (Auburn is the first steel mill to participate in Performance Track.) By the end of August, Auburn had already exceeded its 2002 commitment to EPA by recycling more than 500 tons of tires.



To date, the facility has recycled more than 1,750 tons of scrap tires, the equivalent of more than 175,000 passenger tires. The recycled tires provide an alternative carbon source for making steel in the electric arc furnace, reduce coal consumption, result in fewer tires in landfills, and offer a source of incremental sales for the Auburn facility.

As an alternative carbon source, components of recycled tires result in a savings of about 2,000 pounds of coal per heat. Tires are added with steel scrap as a source of carbon, energy, and steel, replacing coal. The tires provide fuel energy while the steel belts and beads become part of the scrap charge. During the process, oxygen is injected into the furnace to ensure clean and complete combustion. Once the process is completed, the tires are entirely consumed.

Not only does Auburn's tire recycling initiative benefit the environment and reduce the amount of natural resources required to make steel, it also provides the company with an additional source of income and savings on coal.

Auburn continues to increase its tire recycling business by adding customers. The facility currently serves eight customers by taking delivery of scrap tires that customers would otherwise have to pay for disposal in landfills. The customer list includes four local municipalities.

In addition to taking scrap tires off the hands of its customers, Auburn also has played a role in helping its customers safely store tires and address any crises that may arise. For instance, the City of Auburn Fire Department recently used Nucor Auburn's fire suppressant to extinguish a major tire fire at a customer's facility. Because the mill was prepared and had the correct inventory of fire suppressant on-hand, it helped the City and other fire departments successfully fight the fire.

As a result of Auburn's interest in the local community and its environmentally conscious processing efforts, the State enthusiastically supports the program. Nucor Auburn recently shared positive results of its tire recycling program during a community-wide open house on October 26th. More than 600 people attended.

With the success of the program, Auburn is looking to improve and expand its tire recycling. The facility recently completed the first trial charging tires on rims in the electric arc furnace. Additional trials are under way. If the process proves successful, Auburn will gain opportunities to extract even more quality steel and their recycling customers will benefit from reduced processing costs.